

California State Journal of Medicine.

OWNED AND PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE
Medical Society of the State of California

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Official Register, - - - }

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

All Scientific Papers submitted for Publication must be Typewritten.
Notify the office promptly of any change of address, in order that mailing list and addresses in the Register may be corrected.

VOL. III DECEMBER, 1905. No. 12

NOTICE

The next meeting of the State Society will be held in San Francisco, April 17th to 19th, 1906; the Rocky Mountain and Inter-State Medical Society will meet with us at that time; clinics will be arranged for the 16th, 20th and 21st, so that the sessions will, practically, occupy the entire week. Three major symposia have been selected by the Program Committee: Anesthesia, Lungs (not including tuberculosis), and Stomach. A few volunteer papers in these symposia will be accepted by the Committee, provided that members desiring to present them will notify the Committee BEFORE JANUARY 1ST.

Members desiring to present papers in the sections, or at the general meetings, are requested to send in their names and the titles of papers as early as possible.

No contributor will be given place on the program unless the title and an abstract of his paper shall be received BEFORE MARCH 1ST, 1906.

The Chairman of the Committee is Dr. Harold Brunn, 1312 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

The exposures made by *Collier's* in its issue for November 4th, are astounding. It is shown, through the reproduction of letters, telegrams, contracts, etc., **COLLIER'S WEEKLY.** that every newspaper in the country is implicated in the alcoholic nostrum fraud; that our own newspapers are not only bound to silence when the question of nostrums comes along, but that they are forced to do the lobbying for the greatest fraud in the world—the American “patent medicine.” From extracts from the transac-

tions of the Proprietary Association of America, it is shown just how beautifully these people are organized, and how they crack the whip over the backs of the newspapers and our legislators. The article is too long to reprint, and abstracts from it would give but a poor idea of the actual degradation of our vaunted “free” press. Free? There never were such slaves since the world began! Every physician in the country should give his hearty support to *Collier's Weekly*, and everyone of us should read the article referred to. There is no doubt in the world that the disgruntled nostrum manufacturers who “work” the medical profession, and who have throttled its medical publications just as effectively as the “patent” medicine men have throttled the newspapers, will join hands with the Proprietary Association in its attacks upon the American Medical Association and upon the medical profession generally. Already they have established a news bureau for the purpose of preparing articles attacking the medical profession, and having them published by their slaves—the newspapers. In our own profession we will have no help except from the *Journal A. M. A.* and the State journals, for practically all the others are owned by the nostrum men who advertise in them. Such leaders as the *Medical Record* (too dignified to pay any attention to its advertising pages) and the *New York Medical Journal* (which openly sides with the nostrum men and has offered its pages to them to express their views on their right to befool the medical profession and the public) will not help us in the fight one whit; indeed, we may consider ourselves fortunate if they do not join with the newspaper slaves and attack us. Learn the facts and then help to spread the news among your patients and your friends. Only in this way can they be placed before the people, for the newspapers have sold themselves for a price, paid in homes ruined and graves filled, that would turn the stomach of an honest man.

Why do the various State Legislatures enact laws regulating the practice of medicine? If one seriously asks himself this question and studiously searches **MEDICAL LAWS.** for the answer, he will find that it is mainly to protect the public against ignorance and incompetence by providing for a minimum amount of educational and scientific equipment which must be possessed by those who will treat the sick or injured. A properly constructed and administered medical law should make it very easy for the well-equipped physician to become licensed, while rendering it practically impossible for the ignorant or incompetent to prey upon the sick. Nothing else is contemplated or desired, and nothing else should ever be allowed to creep into a medical law or the

method of its administration. This one end and object, which should never be overlooked, seems to be too often forgotten or ignored, with the result that many of those States which have excellent laws for the theoretical control of the practice of medicine, are really overrun by charlatans and quacks, while other, apparently less blessed sections, with less rigid laws, or laws more intelligently enforced, are found to be pursuing the even tenor of their way, unaccompanied by the quack and the charlatan. It is not often that the JOURNAL republishes a paper which has previously appeared in another journal, but the truth of these things, which we think cannot be gainsaid, is so remarkably well put in a paper by Dr. Van Meter, of Colorado,* that we consider it wise to publish at page 382 a full abstract with the request that every member of the Society give this question his attention. Dr. Van Meter has been directly interested in the subject of medical-practice legislation for a number of years, and his words are spoken as the result of rich experience. The essential points which he brings out have been the strongest elements in the regulation of the practice of medicine in the States of Alabama and Kentucky. New York has the reputation of having the highest requirements and the stiffest examinations of any State in the country, yet its every considerable city is alive with quacks. Kentucky has made no reputation for itself for stiff examinations or unreasonable requirements, yet there has not been a quack in that State for fifteen years. Enough said?

Mr. Adams, in *Collier's Weekly*, said in his first paper that he had been warned to discriminate between proprietary medicines and nostrums; that many of the former class were good: but when he came to investigate the matter, he found mighty few "proprietary" medicines in the good class. He was quite right. The only real money-making feature of nine-tenths of the proprietary business is graft—graft, pure and simple; just as much graft and the same sort of graft as we find in the business methods of the nostrums advertised to the laity. For years pepto-mangan was held up by some physicians as a type of the "ethical proprietary," which advertised itself only to physicians and in a proper manner. Thanks to the *Journal A. M. A.*, we have been shown the sort of commercial methods pursued by these honorable gentlemen in persuading physicians to make use of their "ethical proprietary," which is really less valuable as a remedy than pharmacopeial preparations of known composition. Consider tongaline and glycozone and Pond's extract, all following exactly the same course as peruna and making capital out of the anxiety which accompanies an epidemic. Contemplate the long list of "medical" jour-

nals which advertise that practically worthless stuff, Pond's extract; or the equally large number of alleged medical journals which help along the graft by advertising syrup of figs as a senna mixture, while the daily papers advertise it to the laity in a manner to lead the public to believe that it owes its virtues, in some mysterious way, to figs. It is a merry game of graft, graft, graft; the manufacturers play the fiddles and bought-and-paid-for "medical journals" dance, and the credulous or ignorant profession is properly hypnotized by the noise and the gyrations. The more we stir the nasty mess of proprietary corruption the worse is the stench.

Where is the freedom of the press? Practically every newspaper in this country has been bought by the alcoholic nostrum manufacturers and has signed advertising contracts with them which contain the following clauses:

1st. It is agreed in case any law or laws are enacted, either State or National, harmful to the interests of the (Nostrum Manufacturing Co.), that this contract may be cancelled by them from date of such enactment, and the insertions paid for pro rata with the contract price.

2d. It is agreed that the (Nostrum Manufacturing Co.) may cancel this contract pro rata in case advertisements are published in this paper in which their products are offered, with a view to substitution or other harmful motive; also, in case any matter otherwise detrimental to the (Nostrum Manufacturing Co.'s) interests is permitted to appear in the reading columns or elsewhere in this paper.

(See *Collier's Weekly*, Nov. 4, 1905.)

It is almost proverbial that Governments advance more slowly than do individuals, and our Government is no exception to the rule. Many hundreds of thousands of people in the United States have known for years that a large number of the so-called "patent medicines" advertised and sold to the general public are nothing but bad whiskey plus some inert vegetable and coloring matter, and are manufactured and sold simply and solely for the purpose of inducing or supplying a craving for alcohol; but our Government has only recently become aware of this fact, officially. Some weeks ago Mr. Yerkes, United States Commissioner of Internal Revenue, issued an order to the effect that all "patent medicines" would be analyzed and the manufacturers of those found to be composed largely of distilled spirits or mixtures thereof, and containing only a small amount of other ingredients (in short, all which are obviously intended as alcoholic beverages) must pay the wholesale liquor dealers' and rectifiers' tax, and that retailers who handle such goods must pay the regular Government liquor dealers' annual tax of \$25.00. The list of so-called "medicines" which will come within the provisions of this order has not been announced,

* *Colorado Medicine*, October, 1905.